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EXTENSION ROLLS UP ITS SLEEVES *

Dons Seven-League Boots in Carrying Price-Control Message to

All Farm People

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Patrick Johnson Learns About Price Control

From the tobacco patch of Patrick Johnson down in Lee County, N. C., to Washington, D. C., is a far cry. Yet the Nation's success in a global war is dependent upon whether Patrick Johnson in Lee County, and farm men and women in every other county in every other State, understand what the leaders of the Nation are driving at. They want to cooperate, but to cooperate intelligently, they need to know clearly the "why and how" of these war-inspired programs.

So when Government representatives talked with Patrick Johnson, June 3, they were pleased to learn that he already knew about the program to control the cost of living. Not to talk about it glibly, perhaps, but he knew in a general way why the program was started and that it would affect him. Furthermore, he had discussed it with his family.

Patrick Johnson is a Negro farmer who lives at the end of a country road. He hardly ever sees a newspaper, and doesn't have a radio or telephone. That he knew about the anti-inflation program was a tribute to his hard-working neighborhood leader, "Doc" Corbett, another Negro farmer, who had been trained for just such a service by the North Carolina Extension Service.

It was less than six weeks since the President sent his message to Congress, calling for decisive action to halt the swiftly mounting cost of living. Yet Patrick Johnson knew about the "gov'ment" program to curb inflation. Furthermore, he had some understanding of the reasons why.

Just how Patrick Johnson learned the facts about the cost-of-living program to curb inflation is illustrative of the work being done throughout the Nation by the State extension services in cooperation with the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

*Report prepared for the OPA and submitted through the Department liaison officer with the OPA.

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Extension Service Trained Millions Last Year

Price Administrator Vandenberg announced his General Maximum Price Regulation on April 28. The very next day, the Washington Extension Service started a 4-day conference to work out an educational plan for advising every farmer in the country about this complicated program to control living costs. From May 6 to 19, Extension conferences were held in co-operation with CPA in 12 regions. Then State extension services held State and district meetings to train county extension agents and representatives of other Federal and State agencies. Simultaneously, specialists of State extension services wrote educational materials which began to roll off the presses and mimeograph machines and out into the counties and to the farms. By May 25, county extension workers had begun to train volunteer community and neighborhood leaders to bring to farm people the facts about the program to control the cost of living.

Armed with simple leaflets, with check lists, and with the knowledge they had gained from their extension agents, they started to contact all farm homes in their neighborhoods.

In North Carolina, the Extension Service worked swiftly, and the 26,000 neighborhood leaders were on the job by May 25. In other States, too, neighborhood leaders were given their assignments late in May or early in June.

It was hardly a week after neighborhood leaders in North Carolina started operating that Patrick Johnson was interviewed to determine how effectively the Government's message had penetrated into remote areas.

And so it is throughout the length and breadth of the Nation. About 600,000 civic-minded farmers and farm women, trained by Extension as neighborhood leaders, are patriotically giving their time and effort to helping farm people to understand the "why and wherefore" of the anti-inflation program.

A report of Extension operations in this field, State by State, would be of awkward length. And the neighborhood leader project was only one of many methods used to carry this message to farmers. The following are selected examples of what is being done in different parts of the country. They illustrate the type of activity which Extension has undertaken in all States in support of the price-control program.

Tennessee Develops Plans for Program

In TENNESSEE, for example, an extensive program has been developed. County farm and home agents, specialists and Extension administrators, together with 15,000 volunteer Community Victory Committeemen, and all other agency people interested in rural welfare, were mobilized in May for a State-wide educational drive to acquaint farm families with the 7-point program to control the cost of living.

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Following the five-State regional meeting in Asheville, N. C., a staff meeting was held in Knoxville, Tenn., to discuss the program, and to determine the informational materials and procedures that were needed to reach all farm families promptly. A meeting of representatives of all State and Federal agencies, working with rural people to acquaint them with the program, was held in Nashville. Then district meetings of all interested agencies were held. These were followed by meetings in all counties as rapidly as possible.

Eight teams of speakers, two to each of the four Extension districts, attended the county meetings to explain the program and outline the responsibilities of Victory Committeemen, so that they might carry the information to their neighbors at community and neighborhood meetings which were then held.

Voluntary Community Victory Committeemen, three to five leading farmers and farm women in each of 2,400 organized communities in the 95 counties of State, had been selected earlier in year. Each committeeman was recognized officially with a certificate of appointment as a Victory Committeeman for "mobilization of farm families for cooperation in War Emergency Programs for the freedom of humanity and civilization."

Attached samples of the informational material on this project, prepared by the Tennessee Extension Service, include:

1. "The Victory Committeemen's Responsibility in the Program for Controlling the Cost of Living."
2. "How Farm Families Can Help Win the War and Control the Cost of Living." (A four-page leaflet prepared for general distribution to farm families.)
3. "A Program to Control Living-Cost." (A three-page mimeograph for distribution to county workers.)
4. "Chart: The Program to Control the Cost of Living." (A two-page mimeograph designed to answer the what, why, and how of the program.)
5. Preliminary letter to Victory Committeemen notifying them that an educational program to control the cost of living will soon be placed in their hands.
6. "Our Plan for Changing Our Family's Spending and to Aid the Program to Control Living Costs." (A printed check sheet to be used by the individual farm family, backed with a personal remark by Director Brehm to the farm families.)

7. "How Farm Families Can Help Win the War and Control the Cost of Living." (A two-color poster to be placed at all points where rural people gather.)
8. "Farmers to Gain Much by Inflation Control" (news release).

In addition, the following material, copies of which are not available, has been prepared by the State Extension Office:

1. Special radio programs bearing on the 7-point program.
2. Material for daily farm flashes to 10 radio stations which cover all sections of the State.
3. News stories to all papers weekly.
4. Bulletin on cooking and canning with less sugar and substitutes.

New Mexico Is Active

NEW MEXICO representatives attended the regional conference at Denver on May 11-12. They returned to Las Cruces and immediately began the preparation of economic and other materials to be worked out in detail at an extension staff conference two days later.

As a matter of fact, some valuable background work had already been done. Both the April and May issues of the "Economic News for New Mexico Farmers" had contained discussions of the general maximum price regulations and of the other price programs in agriculture. Also, New Mexico farmers and agency representatives had a background of several years of experience considering economic problems in the organized county and State land use planning work.

At the State extension staff meeting on the Cost-of-Living Control Program, a detailed procedure was developed whereby the contributions of the State office, the county agents, the county war boards, and the Victory councilmen were outlined. An important feature of the program was neighborhood meetings for discussion of the 7-point program.

Materials developed included the following:

1. Handbook, "Keeping Down the Cost of Living" (Suggestions of the State extension specialists. This includes a detailed presentation of economic facts of the present situation and a discussion of the 7 points.)

2. A two-page set of slogans (An example, "Maybe we can't fly a bomber over Tokio, but we can help finance the trip by war bonds.")
3. "It's Our Scrap Too, Girls!" (A special mimeographed folder for women workers.)
4. "Setting at the Seat of the trouble." (A brief mimeographed folder setting forth the 7 points and giving information on the maximum price regulations in outline form.)
5. "Meeting the Situation." (A mimeographed two-page leaflet on facts about the price control program and pointers on how to meet the situation--5,000 ordered by county agents.)
6. A radio broadcast, "Planning Committees and the Program to Prevent Inflation."

Additional materials, news stories, radio broadcasts, letters for use of county agents and neighborhood and community discussion leaders are in preparation in New Mexico.

Iowa Uses Varied Contact Methods

In Iowa, too, heavy reliance was placed upon the neighborhood leader system to bring the facts of the Program to Control the Cost of Living home to all Iowa farmers. Earlier in the year, the neighborhood leader system had been expanded so that men and women cooperators were selected for each 4-square-mile area--one man and one woman leader for each 16 families. Eighty-two percent of the 28,000 leaders had had previous training in such neighborhood work. Some urban men and women leaders also received such training.

Such direct contacts were supplemented by the usual methods of contacting large groups of farm people, such as through radio and press releases, through meetings, and through the distribution of prepared literature on the Cost-of-Living Program. Copies of such materials, attached hereto, include State extension service press releases such as:

1. Consumers Can Help Hold Down Prices (April 23, 1942).
2. Leaders Discuss Anti-Inflation (Dailies, May 28, 1942).
3. People Must Fight Inflation on Home Front, Bliss Says (Dailies, May 29).
4. Youth's Part in Fighting Inflation (2-fold flier).

5. Inflation to be Discussed Over Long Time Week (Editor June 6).
6. Check Inflation to Help Win War--It's Essential for Happiness of All After War Ends, Warns (Editor Iowa, June 8, 1942, a clip sheet for weeklies).
7. Price Ceilings Not Enough--They Must be Strengthened if Inflation is to be Fully Checked (Editor Iowa, June 10, 1942, a clip sheet for weeklies).
8. County agent releases (Two fill-in stories) for weeklies on nestlage.

A reprint of three articles, appearing in the August, September, and October issues of the Iowa State Economist for 1941, was also sent with the title, How to Stop Inflation.

Radio news flashes on the program (attached) included:

1. Bliss Warns of Inflation Danger--May 30.
2. Cites Inflation Danger--June 2.
3. Answers Inflation Question--June 6.
4. Meetings to Curb Inflation--June 8.

Three radio transcriptions, running about 3 minutes, 45 seconds each, were used on June 5, 8, and 10, over the ten radio stations in the State of Iowa (See attached).

A letter (attached) was prepared for the use of county agents with which they might suggest participation in the State meeting at Ames on May 29 to the heads of important (chiefly agricultural) organizations in Iowa. Thirty-five such groups took part in the conference.

A paper on the President's 7-point program against inflation (attached), containing certain technical information, was prepared for the use of specialists. It was entitled "Taxes and Bond Sales in the Anti-Inflation Campaign."

Besides such broadcast approaches to the public, an intensive program was undertaken through the voluntary neighborhood leaders in order to insure that all rural areas would be aware of the program. The following materials include those used at the district conferences held from June 8 to 12.

1. Our Third Enemy-Inflation (For farm family and town use).
2. Farming for Victory (For the use of 28,000 men and women educational cooperators).

3. The Program for Controlling Inflation (a suggested outline).
4. The Neighborhood Discussion Meeting on Control of Inflation (suggesting questions and providing materials for answers).
5. Suggested Plans and Procedures for Educational Programs in Counties.
6. Suggested Letters and Mass Articles
 - a. To representatives of agencies and organizations regarding county meeting
 - b. To educational cooperators regarding county meeting
 - c. News article regarding county meeting
 - d. To cooperators regarding training schools
 - e. To all farmers regarding meetings to be held by educational cooperators
7. Iowa's E. F. Bell Wins the War - Over the State, Special Issue, June-July 1942.

How Iowa Reached All Farm Families

New York and many other States followed quite similar methods. Following the regional conference on the Program to Control the Cost of Living at New York City on May 18-19, a State conference was held at Ithaca on May 19. In addition to the heads of college departments, extension specialists, and the administrative staff, the State extension wartime council, the presidents and regional chairmen of county extension agents' associations, the executive committee of the New York State conference board of farm organizations, and the chairman of the State U. S. D. A. War Board were in attendance.

District conferences were then held for extension agents and representatives of the county extension committees. These were followed by county meetings and neighborhood meetings for extension agents to meet the representatives of their farmer neighbors.

Charts were used at the State and district meetings and a list of the county meetings was made clear to those who were to lead the training groups the background for the program. A semi-technical summary of the economic needs was prepared for the use of extension specialists.

Two radio talks, entitled "How That Prices are Under Control" and "What's Ahead for 1942," brought out some of the basic facts in the Program to Control the Cost of Living. A two-page, two-color letter was also distributed to the Extension Minutemen (or voluntary neighborhood leaders), giving them the high points of the program.

An indication of how the New York Extension Service handles problems of a topical nature is indicated by the attached copy of the New York State Farm Forum, a special edition for extension workers, dated May 21, 1942. Some 17 committees of extension specialists and others have been organized to consider special topics, digest the information, and pass it on to other workers for their information. This permits quick adjustments to problems as they arise and aids quick shifts in the educational farm program. In this case, it announced the chief points of the program to war on inflation and also contained a detailed statement on "What Are Parity Prices for New York Farmers." A three-page mimeographed summary of "What Are Parity Prices for New York Farmers" was also available.

Miscellaneous samples of attractive and well-planned materials used in other States are also attached but the above examples illustrate the varied methods and educational procedures used to carry the message on ways to control the cost of living to the John Does and Patrick Johnsons of every State and to the people dwelling on farms in general. It is recognized throughout the Nation as an important phase of the War for Freedom.

Reports from all States indicate the keen interest that is being taken in the program to control the cost of living by people of all walks of life. Extension workers in the field find it essential in general to be familiar with the economic background and mechanics of the program in order to answer the questions of farmers and neighborhood leaders, who are seeking more information on what can be done, first hand.

